

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 AMMAN 03720 151828Z

44

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 151754Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO /SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8534

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T AMMAN 3720

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR MASS JO US SA

SUBJECT: JORDAN AIR DEFENSE

REF: AMMAN 3709

1. KING WAS AGAIN IN TOUCH WITH ME EVEING OF JULY 15, HE TOLD ME THAT SAUDI CHIEF OF STAFF HAD ARRIVED AND BROUGH A MESSAGE FROM PRINC E

SULTAN SAYING THAT SAUDIS WERE PREPARED TO FINANCE JORDAN AIR DEFENSE DEAL. I ASKED THE KING WHAT LEVEL SAUDIS WERE TALKING ABOUT. KING SAID THE DEAL WHICH I HAD BRIEFED TO HIM AND WHICH HE HAD BRIEFED TO SAUDIS IE THE \$510M -543M PROPOSAL

2. KING SAID THAT SAUDIS WANTED TO FUND THE DEAL OVER A NUMBER OF YEARS I ASKED HIM HOW LONG THAT WOULD BE. KING SAID PERHAPS TEN YEARS. I ASKED HIM IF SUAIDS HAD GIVEN ANY REASONS. HE SAID YES THAT SAUDIS HAD EXPLAINED THAT THIS WAS THE WAY THEY ALWAYS FUNDED SUCH ARRANGEMENTS. KING ADDED "I HOPE TO GOD THIS WILL NOT STAND IN THE WAY OF WORKING OUT THE DEAL". I MADE SUITABLY OPTIMISTIC BUT NON-COMMITAL NOISES IN RESPONSE.

3. KING ALSO INDICATED SAUDIS MADE CLEAR THEY THEY WERE IN DIRECT TOUCH WITH US AND WERE AWAITING THE ANSWER TO SOME QUESTIONS TO WORK OUT THE FINAL TERMS FOR THE DEAL.

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PAGE 02 AMMAN 03720 151828Z

4. IN THE ABSENSE OF A DIRECT SAUDI REACTION TO US ON THE BASIC

OF OUR ANSWERS TO THEIR QUESTIONS IT IS OBVIOUSLY DIFFICULT TO
KNOW WHAT THEY HAVE IN MIND. IN ANY EVENT THEY SEEM TO HAVE COME
A LONG LONG WAY FORWARD IN WORKING OUT THE DEAL FROM THEIR
END. HOPEFULLY THEY CAN AGREE TO STAGGER THE PAYMENTS TO MEET THE
PROGRAM AS DEVELOPED OR IF THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE THAT WE CAN USE FUNDS
AVAILABLE TO WORK OUT CREDIT TERMS SO THAT SAUDIS CAN DO SO.
RECENTLY EMBASSY PROPOSED USING \$60M IN CREDIT REPAYABLE OVER TEN
YEARS WHICH WOULD SWING THE DEAL IF
SAUDIS ARE STUBBORN ABOUT FRONT END LOADING THEIR PAYMENTS IN TERMS
OF PRESENT SCHEDULE.
PICKERING

SECRET

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